

The Need For Proper Oversight

I. Introduction:

A. The primary work of a preacher/evangelist is to live and teach the word of God (**I Timothy 4:11-16**, **II Timothy 2:1-4**, **II Timothy 2:22-26**, **II Timothy 3:14-4:5**, **Titus 2:1**, and **Titus 2:15**).

1. Sometimes that's "clean up" duty (**Titus 1:5**) and efforts to keep error out of the body (**I Timothy 1:3-7**).
2. Sometimes that is making sure the saved continue onward (**Acts 14:22**, **I Corinthians 4:17**, and **I John 2:24**).
3. Sometimes that is teaching and converting those who are outside of Christ (**Acts 8:30-38**).
4. The work of an evangelist NEVER included overseeing the local congregation.

B. Each of us are to submit to one another (**Romans 12:10** and **Ephesians 5:19-21**).

1. An example of how this plays out is that we tarry for one another regarding the Lord's Supper (**I Corinthians 11:23-33**).
2. Submission to one another doesn't put the strongest in the greater authority (**I Corinthians 12:22-25**).
3. Think about the vulnerabilities in this system without leaders to balance it! How often we assemble - left up to the weakest. How long we assemble - left up to the weakest. Our spiritual growth - heavily impacted by the weakest.

II. Body: Elders Are The Overseers (**I Peter 5:1-4**).

A. In any discussion regarding authority, we cannot forget who the chief authority in the church is (**Ephesians 5:23-25**, **Colossians 1:12-19**, and **Hebrews 3:1-6**).

1. We have instructions so that we know the right ways to behave within the body of our Lord (**I Timothy 3:14-15**).
2. The authority of Christ is above all people both within and without the church (**Matthew 28:16-20**, **Ephesians 1:19-23**, and **I Peter 3:21-22**).

B. The Scriptures show us the importance of having elders in every congregation (**Acts 14:23**).

1. The idea of having "rule" (**Hebrews 13:7**).
2. Men that watch for your soul (**Hebrews 13:17**).

C. Consider what happened of old when the shepherds of Israel failed (**Jeremiah 50:6** and **Zechariah 10:1-3**).

1. Scattered as the shepherds weren't feeding or protecting the flock (**Ezekiel 34:1-10**).
2. Even the future of Ephesus, in the N.T., was in jeopardy because of coming issues among the eldership (**Acts 20:28-31**).

D. We need qualified men (**I Timothy 3:1-7** and **Titus 1:5-9**).

1. Men to whom things can be delivered into the hands of (**Acts 11:27-30**).
2. Men that can capably rule [...to be over, to superintend, preside over; to be a protector or guardian... to care for] (**I Timothy 5:17**).
3. Without qualified, capable leaders churches have often fallen prey to men like Diotrephes (**III John 1:9-11**).

III. Conclusion: In the meantime, we have to be like the ants (**Proverbs 6:6-8**).